

**Minutes**  
**STATE SOIL CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING**  
**9:00 a.m. Tuesday, June 12, 2007**  
**ISDA-101 W. Ohio St., Suite 1200**  
**Indianapolis, IN 46204**

**Attendance**

**SSCB Members**

Bob Eddleman  
Larry Clemens  
Nola Gentry  
Jim Cherry  
Gary Conant  
Warren Baird  
Bill Mann

Gary Langell, DNR  
Bob Weaver, Johnson County SWCD  
Mary Lou Renshaw, IDEM  
DeeDee Sigler, IASWCD  
Robert Woodling, Monroe SWCD  
Gail Peas, FSA  
Chris Remley, Tippecanoe SWCD  
Kimberly Neumann, NRCS  
Jane Hardisty, NRCS  
Jill Reinhardt, NRCS  
Becky Ross, NRCS  
Dan Hovland, NRCS  
Paula Baldwin, IASWCD  
Lyle Burttsfiel, IASWCD  
Jon Roberts, IASWCD  
Jennifer Boyle, IASWCD  
Jim Droege, IASWCD  
Sherm Bryant, Kosciusko County SWCD

**Audience**

Kelly Gentry, ISDA  
Cris Goode, ISDA  
Tammy Lawson, ISDA  
Deb Fairhurst, ISDA  
Jerod Chew, ISDA  
Amy Eizinger, ISDA  
Seth Harden, ISDA  
Andrew Pursifull, ISDA

**9:00 AM: Call to Order**

Bob Eddleman asked that Tammy Lawson introduce the new ISDA staff members. Lawson introduced I Kelly Gentry- ISDA's new DSC Special Assistant, Amy Eizinger- ISDA's Grants Coordinator and ISDA-DSC interns: Andrew Pursifull and Seth Hardin.

Eddleman requested that the Board acknowledge the recent passing of Lewis McKee. McKee was a key person early on in Indiana's Soil Conservation movement. McKee served six terms on the SSCB from 1965 to 1983. Eddleman asked that McKee's 18 years of service and many more years of impact since be noted and remembered in the minutes.

**Draft Minutes of April 2007**

Nola Gentry moved to approve the minutes as presented. Warren Baird seconded and the motion carried.

**Leadership Development:**

**Supervisor Resignations/Appointments-Cris Goode**

Cris Goode presented the temporary appointment requests from Vanderburgh and Harrison SWCDs.

Vanderburgh requested the temporary appointment of Holly McCutchan due to the recent resignation of Dr. Les Nunn. Harrison requested the temporary appointment of Chad Baker due to the recent death of Roscoe Emily.

Warren Baird moved to approve the requests. Bill seconded. Discussion followed and the motion carried.

**District Requests-Bob Eddleman** <http://www.in.gov/isda/soil/sscb/board/june07/index.html>

Dekalb- See Link. Discussion followed.

Baird suggested that extra CWI funds be returned to the CWI Grants Program to fund new request as previous decisions have dictated.

Nola Gentry suggested that this particular request fell well within the original purpose of the grant.

Discussion continued regarding how the CWI Grants program is administered. Eizinger explained that all reports are audited against original proposals. Any changes in grants are brought before the board.

Eddleman shared that he had recently learned the purpose of reverting vs. non-reverting funds and thought the SSCB needed to be aware of this information. Eddleman explained that non-reverting funds were not created to build a fund, but rather the purpose is to assist in completing a project beyond the fiscal year. This is something that should be considered. The SSCB needs to be cautious to not simply just build the fund because we don't want to jeopardize the fund by not utilizing it correctly.

Lawson explained that ultimately the budget agency and legislators want to see the funds working and that the board just needs to be able to illustrate that with their programs.

Gentry moved to approve the DeKalb request. Jim Cherry seconded and the motion carried.

Gibson- See Link

Larry Clemens moved to approve the Gibson request. Cherry seconded and the motion carried.

Greene- See Link

Discussion followed. Baird moved to approve Greene's request. Gentry seconded and the motion carried.

LaGrange-See Link

Discussion followed. The board requested by consensus a letter stating that they will approve the request, however they did not appreciate the "after the fact " request for budget revision. Gentry moved to approve LaGrange's request. Cherry seconded and the motion carried.

Harrison-See Link

Clemens moved to approve Harrison's request. Baird seconded and the motion carried.

Clay- See Link

Gentry moved to deny Clay's request as it was an example of the type of request the board had determined needed to revert back to the program. Clemens seconded and the motion carried.

Ohio AFR submission-See Link

Lawson explained that Ohio's \$10k match had not been approved due to an incomplete AFR. DSC is currently waiting on additional documentation from Gene Weaver to present to the board. Baird moved to table the \$10k match Ohio decision until further documentation is received. Gentry seconded and the motion carried.

### **SSCB Chairman's Report- Bob Eddleman**

#### **CWI Funding & Next Steps**

#### **SSCB Sub-Committee Reports and Recommendations (see attachments)**

##### **Executive Committee Report and Recommendations- Bob Eddleman**

Over the past few weeks the SSCB sub-committees have met internally to discuss possible ways to utilize new CWI funding. The Executive Committee's recommendation to the SSCB is that in order to utilize those funds most effectively, the board must get additional input from SWCDs, the partners and others over the next 30-60 days.

##### **District Capacity Committee Report and Recommendations- Nola Gentry.**

The District Capacity Committee has recently met regarding CWI funding as well as Rule 5.

### **Rule 5**

The committee has held two good Rule 5 meetings with IDEM and IASWCD. The committee is in a review process of a level based Rule 5 program that Districts can opt in or out of. The minimum statutory requirement is that Districts accept the plans. This program will allow Districts to opt in to service levels beyond this minimum requirement if they so choose. The program will put into writing what IDEM and Districts

can expect of one another at the different levels of service. Decisions on Rule 5 program participation will rest at local level with SWCDs, County Councils, etc. Funding for such programs would also come from the local level.

The Sub-committee also met with the DSSs to discuss additional CWI funding.

#### **CWI Grants Committee Report and Recommendations- Warren Baird**

The sub-Committee looked at how they could help all Districts in a meaningful way. (See map attached) The CWI Grants program does not currently distribute funding in any sort of even way. The sub-committee has been having discussions on how they distribute things more evenly. The committee has had discussions of going to watershed approach to designate funds more evenly across the state while maintaining local control through a watershed board made up of each District. This would allow Districts more access to technical assistance. Each District would direct Watershed staff through the Watershed board. These technicians would be technical in nature but also have a working knowledge of all programs available in the watershed.

Eddleman concluded by stating that the board was looking into the best way to utilize this small amount of funding to get more conservation on the ground.

#### **Partnership Comments**

##### **Paula Baldwin-IASWCD**

How do these positions differ from IDEM's Watershed positions.

Eddleman explained that these positions would play a role in technical assistance on the land. Such an individual would be highly technical, able to assist in conservation planning and able to get those plans on the ground. This individual would also be skilled in learning the leveraging of programs and funds.

##### **Jennifer Boyle- IASWCD**

When will the next CWI Grants Cycle start? The Board had previously tried to establish a grants cycle to begin Sept. 1 every year. Has this been postponed? Districts are currently preparing to approach their county councils and need to know if the grants program will still be in place.

Baird clarified that all current CWI Grants are still in place including all multi-year contracts.

Eddleman agreed that the SSCB needed to communicate the timeframe of how they planned to move forward with the program and would do so following the meeting. Eddleman clarified that the SSCB would not make a determination of how CWI funds will be utilized at today's meeting because they wanted to gather District input prior to that decision.

##### **Jim Droege-IASWCD**

Droege passed out a written document to the Board. (See Attached Document)

##### **Chris Remley-Tippecanoe SWCD**

Remley asked the SSCB if they were considering utilizing all CWI funds or just a portion of the funds to pursue possible future concepts.

Baird responded that nothing has been decided at this time and that it was completely feasible to consider maintaining the current grants program while pursuing other concepts if that is what the board determines as the best use of funds.

Remley asked if the board plans to include urban communities in CWI programs in the future since they had been left out during previous rounds of CWI Grant funding.

Eddleman responded that a watershed concept that utilizes a watershed board would do just that for urban communities. The priorities of that watershed's projects would be determined locally by Districts in that watershed and should serve the interests of urban communities in those type of areas.

**MaryLou Renshaw-IDEM**

Is the current proposal public? We have heard things through the grapevine. At IDEM we were very excited to learn about the CWI funding and feel that it might be an opportunity to leverage 319 programs. IDEM's Watershed Specialists see a real need for technical assistance on the ground. However, IDEM feels a little bit in dark on what the current proposal looks like. We have heard the number of 25 watershed specialists. Is it 1 million over two years divided by 25?

Baird responded that although rumors are rampant, there was no proposal. Nothing has been released publicly because nothing has been determined. The SSCB is still collecting input on the best use of the funds.

Eddleman explained further that while the board does not have a proposal, they do have a broad concept that they are looking further into. This concept is a watershed based approach that comes from a history of watershed based discussions dating back prior to T by 2000. This in no way is a proposal but a concept to begin discussions and gather input.

Cherry clarified the SSCB's intention regarding the Grants program by stating that the board had wanted to get on a regular schedule with the Grants program. The SSCB's goal has always been to make all programs better. However, the board could not make any decisions or plans for the CWI funding until the budget was given to them. No one has said that the board plans to do away with anything. However, a quick decision on how to best utilize CWI funding will not best serve Districts. The SSCB needs to take the time and gather input to make the best decision. If this causes a need for the Grants program to be delayed for 30 days then so be it.

**Jane Hardisty- NRCS**

Hardisty requested that the Board needs to be provided with information from partnership to avoid duplication when it comes to technical assistance. CWI currently supports 20 employees now and before the board considers doubling that number, we need discussion. Current employees lack training plans and job approval authority. We need to make sure we have the right kind of staff and think about job descriptions. We need to gather input and data to know full extent of the partnership's needs.

**Robert Woodling- Monroe SWCD**

Woodling was happy to hear that the SSCB wanted to gather input from Districts. What are your thoughts on how to gather that information? Regional meetings to gather input by watershed?

Eddleman responded that facilitated regional meetings that offer opportunity for full input would be a great start. He continued that perhaps the SSCB could utilize the Purdue IP system and simultaneously have 8 regional meetings with a broadcast and then a local meeting to collect input in each region.

**Bob Weaver- Johnson SWCD**

Weaver shared that Districts have suffered from all of the recent change. Don't change things again. Please make a quick decision on the CWI grants program to give Districts something they can rely on. We expect a CWI grants program opportunity. Please put the additional money in CWI grants program. We already have watershed technicians.

We know there is a plan. We know people have been told to keep it secret. We have been fighting for the CWI Grants funding to be increased. Don't take it away.

**Gail Peas- FSA**

Peas explained that while she was not a part of the official partnership, FSA did administer the largest conservation program in Indiana. Federal programs don't get down to local level due to misinformation and miscommunication. Whatever you do you need a good training program.

Peas continued that she hoped the SSCB would consider continuing a state-federal CREP partnership in this climate of \$3-\$4 corn. In Indiana we have two main problems -we don't put money in conservation and we dilute it and don't make any impact.

Peas also requested that other CREP partners such as DNR and TNC be brought in to gather input.

Bill Mann asked Peas how many counties are currently eligible for CREP?

Peas responded 27 Counties. There are a small number of counties because there are not enough dollars to include more.

Mann shared that the board is considering how to spread funds more evenly among Districts and that when he looks at the current distribution it is not as even as it could be.

Mann also asked how many IDEM funded watershed technicians are currently out in the field?

Renshaw responded that she could not provide the current number of IDEM funded watershed based staff but would look into it. She added that she would encourage the SSCB to leverage the funds, particularly through the 319 program. She shared that she was also not a part of the official partnership but would welcome an opportunity to comment.

**Chris Remley- Tippecanoe SWCD** (See Attached Document)

Remley passed out a written document to the Board and requested that the board considered increasing the state match. Remley urged the board that operating funds are needed and that progressive counties should be rewarded.

Eddleman added that he had also received a similar request via written comment sent in from Marion SWCD.

Eddleman asked for suggestions on how to best gather input. Would a simulcast with a regional meeting to follow serve the purpose?

Baldwin responded that she liked the idea of simulcast. That way everyone hears the same word to alleviate subtle nuances.

Weaver responded that he did not think simulcast was best for decision making. Small groups will offer more input.

Hardisty responded that communication will be key and that talking points would provide consistency. Hardisty went on to explain that whether or not the SSCB intended it or not, the partnership leaders felt decisions had already been made.

Eddleman responded that anytime you begin to do anything you need to gather internal input before moving forward to get external input, just like any other organization. Eddleman went on to share that small groups are very useful but the SSCB wants everyone to have the opportunity to provide input so their ideas could be heard.

Gentry suggested that they hold a simulcast and gather input locally. She continued that they should perhaps offer a web-based/written comment period as well to allow for individual comment.

Clemens asked who should be in charge of collecting all 92 county ideas?

Eddleman suggested that perhaps they form a group to organize this input gathering

Hardisty offered that the SSCB could utilize the ICP Outreach Committee

Eddleman asked the Outreach Committee to design the best way to gather input.

Eddleman concluded that the focus needed to be on the following three issues: 1. We need to let people share their input. 2. We can't wait to implement a program. 3. We have to follow-through on what we have sold the legislature on: leveraging funds, providing technical assistance and building district capacity

Clemens encouraged the board to discuss with legislators why they funded CWI.

Lawson shared that she would offer further budget info during report. She continued that the SSCB and/or DSC have no preconceived plan. She noted that they had been criticized for having a plan and questioned about not having details in the same breath.

Lawson asked the SSCB what they would like to do in regards postponing the CWI Grants program cycle?

Gentry suggested that Districts should proceed as if there were a Grants program this fall and then they have options to pursue other funding for those projects if by chance the program is not there come the fall. Gentry explained that a District might not get the grant even if there is a program.

Lawson suggested that the SSCB consider re-evaluating the CWI Grant program to better assist counties like Johnson and incorporate IDEM's 319 leveraging needs for districts. This would allow for much more leveraging and thinking outside of the box.

Lawson stated that we should not underestimate the leadership of the SSCB. There is a wealth of knowledge on the board and they have the District's best interest at heart. It is going to be a lot of hard work.

Eddleman concluded that the SSCB is only partner who asks for input on how to use funds. Other partners do not ask how many people to hire or what programs to fund. All of the other partners make their decisions and then share them. The SSCB and DSC are seeking input prior to making decisions and this should speak to our desire to work with Districts and the partnership.

Clemens suggested that the SSCB give the Outreach Committee a time frame for collecting input.

Lawson suggested the SSCB Executive Committee to work with Outreach Committee on a plan and a timeline

Baird moved to put the CWI grants decision on hold for at least 60 days. The SSCB will gather input through Outreach Committee during that time. Nola seconded. Discussion followed and the motion carried.

The board then decided by consensus that they will make a decision on the utilization of all CWI funds at the August meeting.

The board may hold a July meeting if necessary to discuss the input they are gathering. The Executive committee will determine a meeting time and location if necessary once the outreach committee sets the dates for the input sessions.

## **BREAK & RETURN FOR A WORKING LUNCH**

12:19 PM Eddleman called the meeting back to order.

### **ISDA Report -Tammy Lawson (Written Memo attached)**

Baird asked how the AEDI was structured. Lawson explained that there will be three county meetings and three regional meetings.

### **CREP Update-Jerod Chew (See attachments)**

Clemens asked if Chew knew of any input from landowners on our CREP program based on economics.

Chew stated not at this time but he hoped to gather such input in the future.

## **District Support/Updates-Jerod Chew**

Chew reported that the next District Visits was scheduled for July in Dubois County.

## **Clean Water Indiana Grants – Tammy Lawson/Amy Eizinger (see attachment)**

### **DNR Report -Gary Langell-**

DNR recently applied for landowner incentive grant . They received joint funding for Forestry and F&W to address in danger species and wildlife friendly habitats. This program will become available in August.

DNR is also working with FSA on their new SAFE program. See FSA report for details.

### **IDEM Report -MaryLou Renshaw-Written Report to be emailed.**

### **Purdue Report -Gary Steinhardt-NoReport**

### **IASWCD President's Report - Jim Droege Written report attached-**

Eddleman asked about the best time for the SSCB to meet at Annual Conference?

Boyle responded that they currently scheduled the SSCB from 8:00-10:30 AM on the Monday morning of Conference.

### **NRCS State Conservationist's Report -Jane Hardisty- Written Report Attached**

### **Farm Services Agency Report-Gail Peas-Written Report Attached**

Peas went on to share that it will soon become increasingly difficult to maintain the current level of sharing of information between federal/state and local agencies. Future restraints will be due to USDA's interpretation of the statutory requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. She encouraged the partnership to speak to their congressman and USDA federal leaders.

Droege suggested the partnership consider a joint letter to congressmen and USDA from the ICP.

Cherry responded that he felt more involvement of landowner was a good thing.

Peas also explained the difference between disaster funds and disaster programs. Disaster funds are available for low-cost disaster loans. Wide-spread disaster can bring about a congress enacted disaster program. Emergency haying and grazing may take effect this year.

## **SWCD Foundation Report -Christa Jones-No Report**

### **Leadership Development Workgroup Update-Nola Gentry**

The workgroup met last week with local planning committee for phase II of trial period. The NE region will have second training phase. The SW will start phase I soon. The group has continued planning on how to make this program a permanent program. They feel they need a part-time position (1 day a week) to assist in logistics. Janet Ayres is currently working on materials under extension resources. The IASWCD is looking for grant money to offset costs for this program. The group does not want the program to hinge only on grant monies. They feel they need more permanent funding and they believe this position should be housed in ISDA-CWI.

### **Delivery System:**

Delivery System Workgroup Update-No report

### **Funding:**

Funding Workgroup Update-No report

### **Accountability:**

Accountability Workgroup Update-Tammy Lawson

ISDA will be upgrading the Web site over the next two months. DSC is utilizing a Programmer and IT staff to contract databases to support tracking needs for DSC and SWCD staff. This type of accountability tracking will open up all kinds of opportunities for in-kind tracking. This will be an asset in leveraging efforts. DSC is also looking to expedite election process to save SWCDs and DSC time and build a useful database.

**Technology:**

Technology Workgroup Update-Jane Hardisty

Rapid Watershed Assessments: Refer to ISDA written report

The workgroup is excited about training for Robotic Equipment coming up for all 8 technical teams.

**Outreach:**

Outreach Workgroup Update-Cris Goode

Stewardship week: Refer to NRCSS report

PWQ sign up: Refer to IASWCDs report.

**Public Comment-Nothing further.**

**Next Meeting:TBD**

The meeting adjourned at 1:50PM